

## **Guidelines for Utah's Safe Routes to School Program Funding Application**

### **Program Overview**

The Federal Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program was established in 2005, under the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), to enable and encourage children in grades K-8, including those with disabilities, to walk and bicycle to school; to make walking and bicycling to school safe and more appealing; and to facilitate the planning, development and implementation of projects that will improve safety, and reduce traffic, fuel consumption, and air pollution in the vicinity of schools.

### **Program Funding**

Utah's SRTS Program is 100 percent federally funded, and managed through the Utah Department of Transportation (UDOT). The federal program employs a multi-faceted approach that addresses both infrastructure and non-infrastructure needs to achieve the program goals. The federal SRTS Guidance directs that 70-90% of each state's SRTS funds go toward infrastructure (engineering or construction) projects, and the remaining 10-30% toward non-infrastructure (education, encouragement, enforcement, and evaluation).

The federal SRTS program was originally funded through September 2009 only, however several extensions of the SAFETEA-LU law have continued SRTS funding at its 2009 levels and is anticipated to continue to do so until the next Transportation Law is passed. Utah has received approximately \$1 million dollars in federal monies each year, which has been for both infrastructure and non-infrastructure projects.

*For this funding cycle, (2010-2011) UDOT will be accepting applications for infrastructure projects only, no non-infrastructure (education, encouragement, and enforcement) projects will be accepted at this time. No matching funds from the applicants are required. UDOT will provide and fund engineering for infrastructure projects separately from the funds awarded.*

### **Infrastructure Projects**

Infrastructure projects should directly support increased safety and convenience for school children to bicycle and/or walk to and from school. Projects must be within 2 miles of the participating school(s) and, applications must provide a current Student Neighborhood Access Program (SNAP) Plan of the school's walking boundaries, clearly identifying the safest walking routes.

In past funding cycles the majority of funded projects have been sidewalks, however applicants are welcome to submit requests for any infrastructure project deemed eligible according to Utah's guidelines. Due to limited funding the selection committee reserves the right to limit the scope of a specific project if necessary to fund other worthy projects. Therefore, please list projects according to priority. The following is a list of infrastructure projects that are both eligible and ineligible under the Utah guidelines for SRTS infrastructure funding:

<b>Eligible Projects</b>	<b>Ineligible Projects</b>
Installing New Sidewalks	Improving or Maintaining Existing Sidewalk
Off-Street Bike and Pedestrian Facilities	Improvements to Pick-Up and Drop-Off Areas
Pavement Markings (bicycle lanes, crosswalks, etc.)	Replacement of Roadway Markings or Signs
Increasing Connections between Locations	Improvements to School Bus Stops
Installing Bicycle Parking Facilities	Supplanting or Replacing Existing Funding
Traffic Calming Features	Pedestrian Bridge/ Overpass
Installing School Related Signs	Portable Speed Monitor Trailers
	Payroll or Overtime Shifts

*Depending on the number of projects selected for funding, it may take approximately two years from the date funding is awarded before construction on some proposed projects is completed.*

### **Eligible Applicants**

Before applying for these funds, please note that the organizations applying for these funds must comply with the provisions in the United States Code title 23 and 49 CFR Part 18. This is the U.S. DOT's regulations that implement the government-wide common rule for grants and cooperative agreements to state and local governments.

Any public elementary, middle, junior high, or public charter school, or school district serving children in grades kindergarten through eighth grade, recognized by the Department of Education, may participate in an SRTS project. In addition, an organization, such as state, regional, or local agencies, including nonprofit organizations; may act on behalf of the participating school(s). *In order to ensure that funding is not awarded for a project where the agency owning the right-of-way will not allow construction or maintain it once it's constructed; the applicant must be the Primary Sponsor and owner of the property on which the proposed project is located, and have applicable right-of-way and utility information available.*

An organization may receive funding to implement part of an SRTS project as long as the organization is able to demonstrate that the funding request supports a comprehensive SRTS Plan which incorporates that school's Student Neighborhood Access Program (SNAP) Plan. No project will be eligible for funding unless it supports and is coordinated with the schools SNAP plan.

### **Student Neighborhood Access Program (SNAP)**

A SNAP plan consists of a map and a text description outlining the safest routes for students to travel to and from school. It should be the result of a planning effort by the school community council to maximize the safety of students traveling to and from school. The goal of a SNAP Plan is to minimize the number of road crossings and exposure to transportation hazards. UDOT is confident in this program's potential to help reduce, and hopefully eliminate, vehicular accidents involving child pedestrians near and on school property. Additionally, without a well-developed SNAP Plan in place, UDOT and local jurisdictions are unable to make infrastructure changes (signs, road markings, etc.) that could make traveling to school safer for children.

UDOT has recently updated the SNAP Resource Guide and SNAP web-based software program, to assist in the creation and implementation of each school's SNAP Plan. The Guide explains the key components of the state requirements and provides information and instructions needed to develop and implement a SNAP Plan. Applicants may access these resources online at [www.udot.utah.gov/srts](http://www.udot.utah.gov/srts) or contact [cwood@utah.gov](mailto:cwood@utah.gov) for login information.

### **Project Selection Process**

The federal SAFETEA-LU legislation does not specify to each state how projects should be selected. Discretion is given to the states to determine their own selection procedures.

UDOT's SRTS project selection process begins with the SRTS Coordinator reviewing each application. Applications passing an initial screening will be selected to advance to the preliminary project scoping phase for further consideration. Applications not selected to advance to the next phase will be notified within a few weeks of the original submission date. Once the "short list" of projects has been assembled, the list is sent to the SRTS Infrastructure Project Manager who will contact each project's primary sponsor to set up a time and date for a preliminary scoping meeting at the proposed project location.

The primary purpose of the preliminary scoping meeting is to identify right-of-way and/or utility issues that may affect the ability to design and construct the proposed project, as well as to develop a rough cost estimate. At this meeting, the primary sponsor must be represented by individuals that possess knowledge of the right-of-way and utility issues, and bring pertinent documentation to the meeting. The Project Manager will then compile the information gathered from the preliminary scoping meeting and give it to the SRTS Coordinator to include with the remaining applications for a final review by the SRTS Selection Committee.

The SRTS Selection Committee is comprised of UDOT's SRTS Coordinator and Safety Program's Engineer, as well as members from the community including public health professionals, school representatives, law enforcement, and community advocacy groups. Each member reviews the remaining applications with its accompanying scoping information and rates the applications according to the following factors: 1) demonstration of need; 2) potential of proposed project to encourage increased walking and biking among students; 3) appropriate sub-sponsors/community support; 4) completed SNAP map; 5) existing programs at the school that encourage walking and biking to school; 6) confirmation to provide required information if project is selected. Once the remaining applications have been individually scored by the s Selection Committee, based on a rating system and scale designed by UDOT, the committee meets together under the direction of the SRTS Coordinator to discuss the applications and make a final decision on which projects to fund.

After the selection process is complete, the SRTS Coordinator notifies each applicant sponsor about the status of their application via email. For applicants that are chosen, further instructions are given regarding the next steps in the process. Sponsors of applications that are not selected are notified that they can contact the SRTS Coordinator to find out why their application was not selected and how they can improve for future submissions.

### **Application Process Timetable**

November 1, 2010	Applications due to UDOT office by 6:00 p.m.
November 1-15, 2010	UDOT initial review and selection of project "Short List". Notify applicants.
*Mid November- Mid January 2011	SRTS Program Manager schedules preliminary scoping meetings at selected project locations.
*Mid January - Mid February 2011	Applications distributed to Selection Committee for review and rating of projects.
*Mid February 2011	SRTS Selection Committee meets to discuss and select funded projects.
*February 28, 2011	Applicants are notified of their funding status.

\* Dates may be extended if a project location can not be scoped properly due to snow coverage.

### **Project Evaluation**

The National Center for Safe Routes to School has developed a school-based in-class student travel tally and parent survey to assist school administrators in determining the number of students walking or biking to school as well as the attitude of the parents in relation to this mode of transportation to school. The data is used to measure how students travel to and from school. It can be used to identify changes in students' school travel behavior with SRTS programs. UDOT feels it is important to obtain this information for each project that is funded through the SRTS infrastructure funding.

Once a project is selected for infrastructure funding, it will be required that a Pre-Evaluation Parent Survey and Student Tally at the participating school(s) be performed prior to the projects beginning, as well as a Post-Evaluation once the project is completed. The school will have the choice to either administer the evaluations themselves before and after the completion of the project, or allow the UDOT SRTS Coordinator to administer the evaluations during the appropriate timeframe. Any applicants not willing to comply with these evaluations will be disqualified from further funding review.